

Bowling on the Girdiron: The Name Game

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Already some of the big ones are behind us like the Las Vegas Bowl which attracted very little attention from the major industry in that city and the Jeep Eagle Aloha Bowl which featured neither the bird nor the vehicle.

Almost all the bowls now have corporate sponsors except those that have too few TV rating points, like the Peach Bowl and the Vegas bowl, or those that have fallen on hard times like the Copper Bowl, formerly the Weiser Lock Copper Bowl. As for the Cotton Bowl it was once the Mobil Cotton Bowl, then last year became the Cotton Bowl Classic, and now is just the Cotton Bowl. One fears that next year may bring the Boll Weevil Bowl.

Then there is the other category, those bowls that have too much class and too much tradition to allow themselves to stoop to such cheap commercialization. Bowls of this type number only one, the Rose Bowl.

The names of bowls can be tricky like the Builder's Square Alamo Bowl. Builder's Square is the sponsor and it is important to remember that this is a do-it-yourself home supply company and not a location. Under no circumstances should you cry out, Remember the Builder's Square Alamo!

The Carquest Bowl is not named for a post-game activity but, I think, for a car parts or accessory dealer. It is played in Pro Player Stadium in Miami which once was Joe Robbie Stadium, but Mr. Robbie died and the right to put a name on the stadium was sold to the highest bidder, which is as it should be in college football.

The Holiday Bowl in San Diego is now the Plymouth Holiday Bowl, and my guess is that most of you, like me, did not know that Plymouth even had a holiday.

My favorite bowl name continues to be the Poulon Weed Eater Independence Bowl because of all the bizarre images that it conjures up at the sound of the name. I, for one, have long sought to be independent of my weed eater, and I welcome any memorial celebration to this important development in the lives of most Americans.

For those who like hopeless cases, the St. Jude Liberty Bowl is for you. Having actually attended the Liberty Bowl twice, I can

tell you that viewed from certain perspectives it can be construed to be a hopeless case, but basically it is simply an overblown patriotic exercise. Few will remember this, but the Liberty Bowl has this name, not because Memphis is the cradle of liberty, but because this bowl has its origins in Philadelphia.

Then there is the Outback Bowl in Tampa which was previously called the All-American Bowl, while the Outback Steakhouse was the sponsor of the Gator Bowl. It is no longer called the Outback Steakhouse Bowl, I suspect, because of all those jokes people made about the outhouse steakout bowl. As for the Gator Bowl it is now the Toyota Gator Bowl. The Outback Bowl is played at Houlihans, not a local bar, but Tampa Stadium, until the owners of the Bucs turned it into a pub without asking the people of Tampa how they felt about it.

Some bowls have vanished like the Freedom Bowl in Anaheim, and the John Hancock Bowl which once was the Sun Bowl. The John Hancock Bowl has become the Norwest Sun Bowl, presumably because after enough tequila in El Paso it appears that the sun rises in the Norwest.

The Fed-Ex Orange Bowl is no longer played on New Year's Day and no longer played in the Orange Bowl but in Pro Player Stadium, once known as Joe Robbie Stadium, which also houses the Carquest Bowl which has different teams than the Orange Bowl and is played on a different day. The CompUSA Citrus Bowl co-sponsored by the Florida Citrus Commission comes early on New Year's Day when Orange Juice can be therapeutic.

Then on January 2 The Nokia Sugar Bowl challenges you to try to figure out what a Nokia is, and if it is safe to have one in your sugar bowl. This year it is for all the marbles, this year's game of the century, to determine who is number one, Florida or Florida State, just like they did two days after Thanksgiving. All of which may be not quite the case if Arizona State beats Ohio State in the Granddaddy of all the Bowl games, the Rose Bowl, which is played at the Rose Bowl on New Year's Day. This year the Tostitos Fiesta Bowl purchased for a king's ransom by the Frito Lay Company will not be such a great investment, as it has almost no meaning whatsoever in determining the champion of anything.

Thus the beauty of amateur intercollegiate athletics where students can be seen competing for the pure joy of sport and where institutions of higher learning can provide entertainment

for millions of Americans and cart off millions of dollars, all in the name of sportsmanship, education, and greed.

On Sport and Society this is Dick Crepeau wishing you a Happy New Year and reminding you that you don't have to be a good sport to be a bad loser.

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